

Impact of Capacity Constraints

The State's adult jail system is facing an immediate and severe capacity crisis. Despite a successful construction effort that has more than doubled jail space in the past 18 years (Chapter 4), crowding has led to current court intervention in 22 jail systems. Figure One lists the counties under court-imposed population caps that compel the early release of over 22,000 inmates per month to make room for new arrivals. The facilities in these counties account for 68 percent of the 1997 ADP.

Because court-ordered population caps affect over two-thirds of the inmate population, ADP numbers vastly understate the need for jail bed space. The early release of over 22,000 inmates per month, coupled with the high number of unserved arrest warrants and growing percentage of felons who need maximum security housing, are better indicators that jail capacity is insufficient.

Although precise data are not currently available on county juvenile facilities, similar trends are reportedly occurring (e.g., population caps, insufficient maximum-security bed space, crowding).

Figure One

22 COUNTIES UNDER COURT- IMPOSED POPULATION CAPS Adult Local Detention Facilities	
COUNTIES	ADP
Los Angeles	20,718
San Diego	5,334
Orange	5,116
San Bernardino	4,680
Sacramento	3,452
Riverside	2,663
Fresno	2,149
Kern	2,041
Tulare	1,277
Stanislaus	1,045
Santa Barbara	939
Merced	512
Placer	436
Butte	404
Yolo	363
Shasta	350
Kings	338
El Dorado	314
Sutter	234
Tuolumne	114
Calaveras	51
Plumas	42
Total	52,572
68% of the 1997 ADP	

Although the Legislature provided funds in 1997/98 and 1998/99 to expand the capacity of local detention facilities, the BOC anticipates that demand for local adult and juvenile facility bed space will continue to exceed capacity. The BOC currently estimates that California may need to add 55,500 more jail beds and 6,000 more juvenile beds during the next 10 years (Chapter 3).

Figure Two

JAIL INCARCERATION RATE INMATE OCCUPANTS PER 10,000 OF GENERAL POPULATION			
COUNTY	GEN POP*	1997 JAIL ADP	1997 RATE
YUBA	61,200	351	57.4
MODOC	10,150	39	38.4
COLUSA	18,600	71	38.2
TULARE	358,300	1,277	35.6
DEL NORTE	28,400	101	35.6
IMPERIAL	142,700	500	35.0
TEHAMA	54,700	187	34.2
TRINITY	13,250	45	34.0
LAKE	55,100	185	33.6
INYO	18,300	61	33.3
KERN	634,400	2,041	32.2
SUTTER	76,100	234	30.7
MONO	10,500	32	30.5
SACRAMENTO	1,146,800	3,452	30.1
MADERA	113,500	340	30.0
ALAMEDA	1,398,500	4,132	29.5
SAN BERNARDINO	1,617,300	4,680	28.9
KINGS	117,700	338	28.7
MONTEREY	377,800	1,073	28.4
SANTA CLARA	1,671,400	4,741	28.4
FRESNO	778,700	2,149	27.6
MARIPOSA	15,950	44	27.6
MENDOCINO	86,000	234	27.2
GLENN	26,900	72	26.8
MERCED	202,000	512	25.3
STANISLAUS	425,400	1,045	24.6
LASSEN	33,850	83	24.5
SANTA CRUZ	247,200	600	24.3
SAN FRANCISCO	777,400	1,823	23.4
YOLO	154,900	363	23.4
SANTA BARBARA	400,800	939	23.4
STATEWIDE AVERAGE INCARCERATION RATE			23.3
SOLANO	378,600	843	22.3
SONOMA	432,800	962	22.2
SAN JOAQUIN	542,200	1,194	22.0
TUOLUMNE	52,200	114	21.8
LOS ANGELES	9,524,600	20,718	21.8
SAN BENITO	46,150	100	21.7
HUMBOLDT	126,100	272	21.6
SHASTA	163,300	350	21.4
EL DORADO	147,400	314	21.3
SAN DIEGO	2,763,400	5,663	20.5
VENTURA	727,200	1,500	20.6
PLUMAS	20,450	42	20.5
BUTTE	198,500	404	20.4

PLACER	215,600	436	20.2
SISKIYOU	44,300	87	19.6
ORANGE	2,705,300	5,116	18.9
RIVERSIDE	1,423,700	2,663	18.7
CONTRA COSTA	896,200	1,617	18.0
NEVADA	88,400	148	16.7
AMADOR	33,450	55	16.4
NAPA	121,200	194	16.0
SAN LUIS OBISPO	234,700	368	15.7
SAN MATEO	711,700	1,111	15.6
CALAVERAS	37,950	51	13.4
MARIN	243,300	289	11.9
STATE TOTAL**	32,957,000	76,894	23.3

* "Estimates of the Population of California Counties and the State," Department of Finance, July 1997

** Total includes Alpine and Sierra Counties (population: 4570)

Figure Two shows county-specific jail ADP and incarceration rates for 1997, arrayed from the highest to the lowest incarceration rate (juvenile facility incarceration rates are not yet available but should be included in the next Legislative Report). Counties which contract to hold inmates from other jurisdictions may have higher than normal incarceration rates, while early releases may lead to lower rates in other counties. Regardless, there are significant differences between counties. The statewide incarceration rate is 23.3 persons per 10,000 general population.